

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

-----: Atty Dkt: SOM-DRE-P1
In Re U.S. Patent Application Of: DRENTTEL ET AL.
Serial No.: 09/366,858
Filed: August 4, 1999
Title: METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR COMPUTER
SCREEN LAYOUT
-----:



: Examiner: Huynh, Thu V.

: Group No: 2176

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Technology Center 2100

APPELLANT'S BRIEF ON APPEAL UNDER 37 C.F.R. 1.192

TO THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS & INTERFERENCES:

This Appeal Brief is submitted in furtherance of the Notice of Appeal date-stamped as received by the USPTO on May 6, 2003. Under MPEP 2274, a one-month extension of time request was submitted to Technology Center 2100.

Our payment of the \$160 fee (SE) for filing the Appeal Brief is submitted herewith, as also noted in the accompanying Transmittal Letter. This Brief is submitted in triplicate.

The Applicant appeals from the Final Rejection of the Examiner dated January 24,

2003, of Claims 1, 3-6, and 8-16 of the above-identified U.S. patent application, which is believed to be in error and should be reversed.

A printed copy of the Claims on appeal is appended as Appendix A.

IDENTIFICATION OF REAL PARTY IN INTEREST

The real party in interest in this appeal are the named inventors, who remain the owners of the patent application.

RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

There are no pending appeals or interferences involving any related cases.

STATUS OF CLAIMS

The total number of claims pending in the application is 14.

Claims 1, 3-16, and 8-16 were rejected and are on appeal.

Claims 1, 6, 11 and 15 are independent claims, and were amended from their original submission.

Claims 2 and 7 were cancelled.

STATUS OF AMENDMENTS

No amendments were submitted after the Final Rejection.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The invention is directed to a novel method for laying out a display of components such as a Web page on a computer screen. Typical Web page authoring methods require the author to specify in HTML code the position and boundaries of various display components in a page. Some authoring tools offer templates that can be sized by the author to fit with other components on the page. These prior methods are inconvenient because they require the author to calculate and manually size each component on a page and ensure that they fit together, and if any component is resized, then the others must be resized to fit together with it. In contrast, the invention uses a template of grid based on a single dimensional ratio, i.e., two units by one unit, which is used for all display components to fit together over the entire display area in building-block or so-called “tatami-mat” fashion. The component templates do not each need to be resized for an exact fit with all others, but rather can be automatically combined and fit together in building-block fashion to make up the display components on the page. The so-called “tatami-mat” mapping of 2x1 grids is used in combination to fill the entire area of the display.

ISSUES PRESENTED FOR REVIEW

Claims 1, 3-6, and 8-14 drawn to the system and method of using a display template of all 2x1 grids were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the reference to Microsoft Front Page 98, published 1997, pages 359-381, in view of U.S. Patent 6,144,991 to England, filed in February 1998.

Method Claims 15 and 16 drawn to the method templates of all 2x1 grids in selectable vertical and horizontal template formats were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by the reference to Couter et al., "Mastering Microsoft Office 2000 Professional Edition", February 1999, pages 105-145, 937-981, and 1031-1056, and under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Courter and above-noted FrontPage and England references.

GROUPING OF CLAIMS UNDER REJECTION

Claims 1, 3-6, and 8-14 are deemed to stand or fall together on the same argument for patentability.

Claims 15 and 16 are deemed to stand or fall together on the same argument for patentability.

APPELLANT'S ARGUMENTS

1. Rejection of Claims 1, 3-6, and 8-14 Under 35 U.S.C. 102(a)

As commonly defined in main Claims 1, 6, and 11, the invention provides a template for the display of information, in which the template has a display area of height and width measured in whole numbers of dimensional units, and the entire display area of said template is filled with grids each having a 2x1 dimensional unit configuration. The author can thus fit together components of the display readily using combinations of 2x1 grid elements. Since all grids are pre-sized as 2x1 dimensional units and the display area is dimensioned in whole numbers of dimensional units, the display components can be mixed-and-matched and readily fit together in building-block fashion over the entire area of the display template without needing to manually resize or account for overlap problems. If a component is changed or moved, the other components can readily be reoriented and

fitted without needing to be resized in relation to other components

In contrast, the Microsoft FrontPage reference only teaches using variously sized templates and sections to form a Web page. In the Office Actions, the Examiner conceded that “use [of] a plurality of grids combined ... to fill the entire display area of said template, wherein the grids ... [are] dimensioned to have ... a two dimensional unit by one dimensional unit configuration, are not explicitly disclosed ...” in the FrontPage reference. However, the Examiner stated that “FrontPage [can] obviously use such (2x1 unit) grids” and also cited the England patent as teaching “providing different frame layouts and grid dimensions”. The Examiner thus concluded that it would be obvious to provide a display template of all 2x1 grids combined together to fill the entire display area.

It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner has appropriated the entire gist of the present invention by deeming obvious what neither cited reference suggests or discloses. It would be impermissible hindsight reconstruction to say that FrontPage or England could have used a template of all 2x1 grids for the entire display area when neither one provides that teaching or suggestion. It is only the present inventors who have provided the teaching to use all 2x1 grids in a building-block or “tatami-mat” fashion to greatly simplify page authoring by obviating the need for manual resizing as display components are changed or for handling overlap problems.

2. Rejection of Claims 15 and 16 Under 35 U.S.C. 102(a)

As defined in main Claim 15, a further invention method employs two template formats composed of all 2x1 grids for the entire display area, one template format having at least one grid arranged for displaying text in a horizontal orientation, and the other template format having at least one grid arranged for displaying text in a vertical orientation, and selecting one of the two formats for the display. With this method, the basic 2x1 grid template approach can be used for authoring multi-language Web pages by selecting the horizontal template format for text content in languages that are written in horizontal orientation (English, European, Middle Eastern, etc.), and

the vertical template format for text content in languages that are written in vertical orientation (Asian, etc.).

Claim 15, as discussed for the other claims, employs the basic invention method in which a template for the entire display area is filled with pre-sized 2x1 unit grids. The Courter reference, like the FrontPage reference, teaches that various sizings of templates and page sections can be used to form a Web page, but Courter does not teach or suggest the use of all 2x1 grids to fill the entire display area. As with the FrontPage reference, it would be impermissible hindsight reconstruction to say that Courter could have used a template of all 2x1 grids for the entire display area when it does not provide that teaching or suggestion.

Claim 15 further specifies creating and selecting between one 2x1 grid template format for displaying text in horizontal orientation and another for displaying text in vertical orientation. While the Courter reference does teach variously using templates and sections in horizontal or vertical orientation, Courter does not teach or suggest creating and selecting between one template format of all 2x1 grids for displaying text in horizontal orientation and another template format of all 2x1 grids for displaying text in vertical orientation.

3. Rejection of Claims 15 and 16 Under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

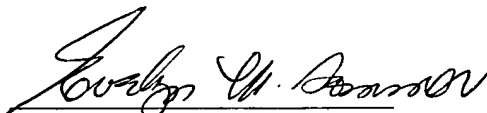
As noted above, the FrontPage, Courter, and England references teach that various sizings of templates and page sections can be used to form a Web page, but none of them, whether considered singly or in combination, teaches or suggests the use of all 2x1 grids to fill the entire display area, nor creating and selecting between one template format of all 2x1 grids for displaying text in horizontal orientation and another template format of all 2x1 grids for displaying text in vertical orientation. The Examiner's inclusion of this rejection under 35 USC 103(a) for obviousness is an implicit acknowledgment that none of the references contains a whole teaching that meet the claim limitations. And it would be impermissible hindsight reconstruction for the Examiner to conclude that using a template of all 2x1 grids for the entire display area is obvious

when none of the cited references provides that teaching or suggestion.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the Examiner's rejections are not well founded and not in accordance with the precedents established by the Board of Appeals and the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals. Accordingly, the Final Rejection of Claims 1, 3-6, and 8-16 should be reversed.

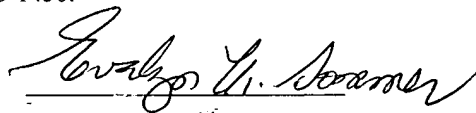
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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

The undersigned hereby certifies that the foregoing was mailed on Aug 4, 2003, by depositing the same with the U.S. Postal Service, first class postage prepaid, addressed to Mail Stop: Appeal Brief - Patents, Commissioner of Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.



APPENDIX A: CLAIMS INVOLVED IN APPEAL

1. A template for the display of information, said template having a display area with a dimensional configuration of a height of approximately a first whole number of dimensional units and a width of approximately a second whole number of dimensional units, said template comprising: a plurality of grids combined and arranged together to fill the entire display area of said template, each of said grids being dimensioned to have approximately a two dimensional unit by one dimensional unit configuration.

2. [Cancelled]

3. The template of claim 1, wherein at least one of said grids is further subdivided into two sub-grids each having an approximately one dimensional unit by one dimensional unit configuration.

4. The template of claim 1, wherein said template is provided in a Web authoring program for generating pages for display with a browser program, said grids comprising frames in which information may be entered, through said authoring program and displayed via said browser program.

5. The template of claim 1, wherein said template is provided within a software program, said grids comprising frames in which information may be entered to said software program.

6. A system of templates for the display of information, each said template having a display area with a dimensional configuration of a height of approximately a first whole number of dimensional units and a width of approximately a second whole number of dimensional units and

being subdivided into a plurality of grids combined and arranged together to fill the entire display area of said template, wherein each of said grids has an approximately two dimensional unit by one dimensional unit configuration, each of said templates in said system having a different arrangement of grids therein.

7. [Cancelled]

8. The template system of claim 6, wherein at least one of said grids is further subdivided into two sub-grids each having an approximately one dimensional unit by one dimensional unit configuration.

9. The template system of claim 6, wherein said system of templates is provided in a Web authoring program for generating pages for display with a browser program, said grids comprising frames in which information may be entered, through said authoring program and displayed via said browser program.

10. The template system of claim 6, wherein said system of templates is provided within a software program, said grids comprising frames in which information may be entered to said software program.

11. A method of arranging information, including text and graphic images, in a template having a display area with a dimensional configuration of a height of approximately a first whole number of dimensional units and a width of approximately a second whole number of dimensional units, said method comprising the step of providing at least one template subdivided into a plurality of grids combined and arranged together to fill the entire display area of said template, wherein each of said grids has an approximate two-by-one dimensional unit configuration.

12. The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of providing a plurality of templates, each said template having a different arrangement of grids.

13. The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of entering information into each of said grids such that said template displays different information in said grids.

14. The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of being provided for in a Web authoring program for generating pages for display with a browser program in which information may be entered through said authoring program and displayed via said browser program.

15. A method for displaying text and other information on a display, said text information having at least two formats, at least one of said formats having a horizontal direction orientation and at least one of said formats having a vertical direction orientation, said method comprising:

creating a first screen by dividing the area of the display into a first plurality of grids which are combined and arranged together to fill the entire area of the display, each of said first plurality of grids being dimensioned to have approximately a two dimensional unit by one dimensional unit configuration, at least one of said first plurality of grids displaying said text information formatted in said horizontal direction orientation, said at least one grid having a horizontal orientation corresponding to the orientation of said textual information format;

creating a second screen by dividing the area of the display into a second plurality of grids which are combined and arranged together to fill the entire area of the display, each of said second plurality of grids being dimensioned to have approximately a two dimensional unit by one dimensional unit configuration, each of said grids having a horizontal or vertical orientation, at least one of said second plurality of grids displaying said text information formatted in said vertical direction orientation, said at least one grid having a vertical orientation corresponding to the orientation of said textual information format;

selecting a first format for said text information from said at least two formats; and displaying said screen having textual information corresponding to said selected format.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein at least one of said grids is further subdivided into two sub-grids each having an approximately one dimensional unit by one dimensional unit configuration.